

Without War

by mrChil4

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Summary: Master Chief and the Arbiter find the end of the war leaving them with no other option but to take up work in John117's hometown shopping center, where they find new and outrageous ways to continue what they do best... Casually wage war with one another.

1. End's Meat

****Without War****

****Chapter 1: End's Meat****

"John! **John!**" a heavy set man roared sitting at a counter of a supermarket. "What the hell kinda' place do you think this is?"

Master Chief came out from the back room with a light green apron over his MJOLNIR Mark VI armor, "The Elysium City Shopping Centre! sir" he responded while clenching his hand angrily.

"Listen here, big shot. We don't slack around here, this isn't the USCN anymore!"

"It's UNCS."

"Shut it Chief!" the man shouted, grabbing a mop and jamming it into Master Chief's arms, "I definitely don't have time for your wise-ass crap, and ****you've**** got some mopping to do in aisle 6. So get going! Oh yea, and I never want to see you lazing around again, you got it?"

As the man walked away, all Master Chief could do was grind the pole of the mop between his hands, "How did my destiny take me to this place! Oh yea!"

"My how the times change. Eh, Chief?" he heard Cortana echo from his

head.

"Yea I know. It's just the world's kind way of thanking me for saving it," he mumbled as he pinched the apron over his armor in a presenting fashion.

"Way to be bitter, Chief."

"You haven't seen me bitter."

"Demon," the Arbiter asked him approaching from behind, "It is your turn to sanitize passageway number six; I had done many of the other already. For the sake of your responsibility, and for the sake of mine, I urge you to comply with our leader's commands to take care of it already."

"Look here" Chief said seeming uncharacteristically irritated, "That man will never be my leader, not in this lifetime. Second, you need to cool it down with all that sophisticated talk." He straightened up and pointed into the Arbiter's emotionless face, "I feel like I'm talking to a cyborg sometimes with you."

"But Demonâ€¦| are you not you a cyborg yourself?"

"Yea you're one to talk," Cortana interjected to Chief.

He stared back through his visor motionless for a moment before responding to both of them, "That's beside the point. It just gives me more bases for my argument, a cyborg such as myself being less uptight that you are!" He looked up slightly, "and you, Cortana, I definitely don't need your two cents too."

"I do not understand your logic, Demon, what is wrong with my colloquial speech patterns?"

Master Chief grumbled feeling a little drained from trying to find an explanation for his oblivious alien ally. "I don't even know where to start really. You just need to pick smaller words, or maybe take what would be 5 words to you, and compress it into one word people would actually understand."

"Soâ€¦| I am verbose?"

"Yea, you'reâ€¦| that, too many complicated words."

"Ah I see. Understood, Demon."

"And stop calling me 'demon' already. It's been years since we've allied up against the Overmind already. I figured the year it took to find me floating in space would more than enough time for you to forget the nick name you and your ugly buddies had for me."

"Oh, agreed then, and my apologies Jonathan."

Chief sighed, "For some reason, I feel like that's even worse."

"I don't know, I kinda like it Chief, Jonathan has a nice ring to it," Cortana teased.

"Hey, you two better be talking about the difference between

detergent products in aisle six, because if you're not, then you better ****move along and get to work!****" the same bossy overweight manager shouted from his open office, not too far from the pair.

The Arbiter glanced over to the boss in acknowledgement and looked back at Master Chief to bluntly grumble, "What a primitive chimpanzee he is."

"Yea, I know what you mean. Just imagine how it feels to know you're in the same species as that guy."

"I grieve for for you, Demonâ€¦ I meanâ€¦ Jonathan."

"Do you mind calling me Chief, or John or something?"

"What is wrong with Jonathan? That is your true name is it not?"

"Yea it would be if I was a loser, ****which I'm not****" Chief grunted lunging is finger into the Arbiter's face.

"Once again, your reasoningâ€¦"

"â€¦is not making any sense blah-blah-blah, that's nice Arbie," Chief interrupted.

"â€¦Arbie?" he responded, turning his head to the side slightly in a perplexed manner.

"Yea, you big guy," Chief reassured him, patting him on his shoulder, "Now come along and let's get this done, I don't feel like getting chewed out by that ball of fat again."

The Arbiter grunted in frustration, with both his duties and with Master Chief's new ludicrous nick name. "Understood, let us go then."

Aisle 6 was excessively wider than most of the others, and stank of medical creams and lotions as well as plastic products. All along the floor were open bottles, smears, spills, and piles of dirt, all down the stretch of the shelves. The Chief and Arbiter stood still at the far end, staring blankly down the aisle in frozen disbelief.

"Wow," Master Chief blurted out.

"This is quite the atrocity," the Arbiter stated as he stepped forward looking left and right.

"Well," Chief muttered in disappointment, "I guess we should get to workâ€¦"

"Were it so easy, Johnathan," the Arbiter said stepping past him slowly.

Master Chief stood tall and looked over to him sternly, "I need a weapon."

The Arbiter stopped and turned back to him, staring at Chief blankly

feeling no need to say anything about what he was thinking.

Chief sighed, "I meanâ€¦a mopâ€¦"

The Arbiter grabbed two mops leaned against the shelves of the aisle, and passed one to the demoralized Master Chief. "It is most unpleasant for me to notice that you still choose to live in the past. The time of war has moved on," he told him as he mopped near his feet casually.

"I'm aware," Chief scoffed as he began furiously mopping the floor, "What tells me that is I'm not getting that tingle in my hand to want to take a battle rifle and shoot you in the face anymore, it's so disappointing for me it really is."

"I can relate to you Jonathan. As I, now lack the urge to detach your head from your body as I had done before."

Master Chief stopped and looked up in disbelief, "Wow, you actually wanted to detach my head?"

"I wouldn't have minded it, it's one of the many ideas I had for you."

"Sheeshâ€¦ Sorry to disappoint you there, Arbie," he responded picking up some empty spilled lotion bottles from the floor. "Who the hell buys this stuff anymore, anyways?"

"It's just a precaution, Chief. Some people still feel comfortable using anti-flood creams and ointments," Cortana explained abruptly.

"Yea, a bunch of crazy people, maybe." And upon finishing his statement, he noticed the Arbiter using the remaining lotion on his long neck. Chief dropped his head in disappointment, "Pshâ€¦ That's a case in point right there."

"What?" the Arbiter questioned, pausing his motions.

"Nothing, big man, just continue pampering yourself before your skin starts to peel."

Looking around at the cream on his hand, he then came to the realization of Chief's cheap shot to his actions and threw his arms to his side and the bottle down to the ground. "Do you mock me, Demon?!" he roared perceptively, throwing his mop off to the side.

"Oh relax, there's nothing wrong with rubbing lotion all over your body to avoid an extinct alien raceâ€¦ Ohâ€¦ wait."

"Your sarcasm does not amuse me," he growled as he stepped up into Chief's face.

"Hey, hey, ladies, pipe down here," their obese boss shouts as he bumbles his way towards them, "The war is over, alright? I don't want a bunch of war-mongers causing any problems for me in ****my**** store."

"See, look what you did now, Arbie."

"Hold your tongue, Demon, before I cut it from your mouth."

"**Hey**, you're like a pair of children! Christ!" the boss shouted throwing his arms up in frustration. "I don't need my two most gargantuan employees bickering in an aisle full of beauty products, scaring away the customers. I need you **both** to get cleaning this filthy mess, and do it **now**!"

The Arbiter bent down and retrieved his mop, grunting to himself as Master Chief turned away silently and continue to plow all the mess along the shelves into a small overflowing pile.

"That's right, you better get to work you two wise-guys. I'm keeping my eyes on you," the boss snarled as he walked away irritably around the corner of the aisle

"Good move, Chief, don't get us into unnecessary trouble."

"Quiet Cortana," Chief whispered in response, "I don't need you lecturing me today. You've been giving me the same heat every day since the UNCS threw me out on the curb."

"**Well** Chief, if someone didn't always have to sleep when not fighting in an expensively maintained cryogenic chamberâ€¦"

"Oh c'mon, I was trained for combat, what else was I going to do in the mean time?"

"â€¦and if you didn't destroy every ship you've been a part ofâ€¦!"

"The Pillar of Autumn and the Dawn were doomed anyways! Not to mention the new ships are way betterâ€¦"

"What ever Chief, but maybe if you did without all those times you trashed talked during Gravball games before you got banned from the UNCS league, the commanding officers wouldn't be so offended by your existence."

Chief paused a moment before straightening up in pride, "Wellâ€¦ I can't help it if I dominate all of them in Gravball, you know. Maybe if they were any good, they could talk a little them selves."

"Chiefâ€¦ Listenâ€¦ without the UNCS, you've got to keep it cool! We need to keep this job to make end's meat! Fighting with the Arbiter over stupid things will just get you fired. This place doesn't need a 6'9, one-ton SPARTAN in his supermarket so you definitely can't mess around."

"Yea, I know, lecture over. I know what you mean," he muttered somberly, slumping down as he mopped as if he was disappointed in some fashion.

As Chief wallowed in his self-pity, the Arbiter nervously stepped up behind him, taking a moment to build the poise to say anything, "Demon, if we split the work to be done down the middle, we both would be finished with these duties far quicker."

Master Chief looked up at the Arbiter standing idly gripping tightly to his mop, and straightened himself, "Yes, that sounds like a plan. I'll manage the left side of the aisle then."

"Excellent, this job will be far more bearable now for us both now, thank you Demon."

"Hey," Chief muttered before the Arbiter turned away, "I never thought I'd be so lucky to have your ugly face around here, Arbie."

The Arbiter looked back apparently surprised by the statement made about him. Looking slightly flattered, the Arbiter took a few steps to situate himself, "Well, I have much to owe you, Demon. During our conquest with the Overmind, the Prophets, and with getting me these duties here in this 'shopping center' as you humans call it. So in a way, I am glad to be allied with you once again as well."

Master Chief stopped mopping to look up and lean against the shelves, "Yeaâ€¦ that's one of those rare times where something you say makes sense there."

"I do not follow, have you not been able understand what I articulate Demon?"

Chief sighed, "No it's not thatâ€¦ Just never mind buddy," he stated shaking his head in frustration. "â€¦and since when am I the 'demon' again?"

"You are a Demon," the Arbiter responded quickly and bluntly, "You always will be a Demon too, because your existence to me serves as one of doubt. Every time I'm encouraged to follow you, I feel like my judgment is being clouded from the righteous and secure path in my life. That keeps you as a demon in my eyes, Jonathan."

Master Chief looked back in shock, "Ouch. Glad to be a light in your life there, Arbie."

"â€¦as I am to be an ally in yours, Demon."

The two nodded to one another in agreement as they continued to mop the floors on their respective sides. "Looks like you two have become surprisingly good friends, Chief," Cortana said happily.

"I guess you could say that, it's not a bad thought."

"Hey **biatches!**"

The abrupt and high pitched voice drew the two to cease their cleaning and look behind them at the end of the aisle. There straight ahead of them was open space! â€¦and right below that same open space was the small form of a Covenant Grunt, who was standing confidently with his arms on his tiny hips. Both of their heads dropped down to lock onto the short grunt, when began walking up to them quietly and haughtily.

Chief had enough of the suspense and enough of the cocky little alien in front of him. So thusly, he decided that he was the best one to break the silence, "Who the hell are you?"

2. Goro Time!

****Without War****

****Author's Note:**** Apologies for the wait, I had a lot on my plate this past week with my first 2 weeks at my new job. But alas, I've found the weekend to get this second chapter done at last, enjoy!

****Chapter 2: Goro Time!****

The pair stood still and quietly, looking down on the small grunt that was now standing at their feet, staring up at them with an irritating expression.

Master Chief, after a moment of trading off stare downs with the smug grunt, asked again, "Well, are you going to answer me or not? Who are you?"

The grunt chuckled quietly without responding and began to saunter around the pair. The Arbiter and Chief both stared down at him, turning and following their heads as he walked around. The grunt appeared to be looking them up and down, which was noticeably annoying Master Chief.

The grunt stepped in front of them and crossed his little arms to look up haughtily, "Looks big dumb Demon and fat ugly Heretic have fallen very far from heaven, hee hee!"

The two of them widened their eyes in disbelief, as they looked to each other to confirm to one another that they heard correctly. "Who do you think you're talking to, tater tot?!" the Chief huffed while leaning downward to get into his face.

"Such unwarranted hostility is not much appreciated little one!" the Arbiter added, pointing down irately.

"Yea, I know!" the Chief added still in disbelief.

"Not to mention that I am not at all, overweight in any way."

Master Chief paused and looked over to the Arbiter momentarily before shaking his head in disappointment, "Yeaâ€¦ anywaysâ€¦!"

"I'm talking with two bum floor cleaners, who need a job for money, because they are poor and pathetic!" the grunt responded stridently, before turning himself around to shake his behind towards them offensively.

"Yea, and if you call me a bum again, shrimp cake, and I just might decide to cave yours in with my boot here," Chief threatened, pointing downward at him.

"Shrimp cake? You talking to ****m**__**e?!**_**" the grunt asked ending in a comically high pitched tone.

"Calm yourself Demâ€¦ I mean Jonathanâ€¦ He is not worth our patience, nor our time."

"Hah! Heretic just have nothing to say, because he accepting that he a stinky loser face!"

The Arbiter choked up and looked back down slowly, "I shall have your spine, vermin!"

"Whoa, whoa!" Chief shouted, grabbing the Arbiter from tearing the annoying grunt apart, "I know, we would both love to send this goon where he belongs in the next world, but I'm pretty sure our goo-ball of a boss wouldn't be to warm and fuzzy to the idea of us killing customers."

"Customer I am not!" the grunt shouted, picking up a bottle and lobbing it at Chief's helmet.

After the bottle bounced off his visor, Chief grunted unenthusiastically without moving his head, "On second thoughtâ€¦"

"Ah there you are, uhâ€¦ Goro'maar."

The Arbiter and Master Chief turned around to see their boss standing there with a pleasant look on his face, "I'm glad you could make it today on such short notice!"

"Pleasure is mine, human!" the grunt explained as he trotted past the two towards their boss. He reached up and shook hands with their boss enthusiastically.

"Figures you two would be friends," Chief cracked wisely.

"You keep quiet John! You've already said enough!" his boss shouted out angrily. "I apologize for the trouble they're giving you."

"No worry! Goro find pleasure in having both the Demon and Heretic in my control!"

"Control?" the Chief cut in.

"What is the meaning of this?!" the Arbiter asked in astonishment.

"You sacks of crap have frustrated me enough, so I decided to get some help in dealing with you."

The two looked at their boss and said together, "Help?"

"That right, biatches!" the grunt shouted, "Me, the boss of you!"

After a few moments to absorb what had been told to them, Master Chief slapped his hand against the top of his visor in frustration, "You have got to be kidding me."

"A lowly grunt, my leader?! This is ludicrous!" the Arbiter shouted furiously.

"Pipe down, Mr. Self-righteous Elite, you're talking to one of the most efficient former deacons of the Covenant, and one of the more intelligent of you alien goons to work for this sector. So I suggest you get used to having to take orders from him! And you too John, don't give him any crap, he's officially you two's new supervisor."

"You two take after me, yes?"

The Arbiter gritted the appendages of his mouth heavily, evidently being far more irritated by the news than Chief was. "Wow, this was pretty unexpected, wasn't it?" Cortana commented.

"You're telling me."

The boss sighed, and looked back down to the grunt, "Well Goro'maar, I see you already are familiar with the big guy here we call the Arbiter, and the chump here still calling himself John-117."

"Very familiar!"

"Wait a second, why am **I** the only chump?" Chief cut in. Next to him, the Arbiter huffed in amusement to himself. "Oh, I bet you think that's hilarious."

"The truth can be sometimes, Demon."

"Okay, shut up you two!" their boss roared, making his way between them before Chief could act. "Like I need you embarrassments fighting in my, already filthy ass, ointments aisle just like children." He looked over to Goro'maar, "I'm counting on you to reign in these clowns, alright?"

"Problem-not! Leave to Goro!"

"Great!" he exclaimed before lashing his sights over to the Arbiter and Chief, "I'll still have my eye on you two, so keep sharp."

"You got it big man," Chief responded pointing downward in the direction of his boss's belly, which as bulging from his stained white t-shirt.

The boss looked down, and then back to Chief in annoyance, "You're on a thin rope, 117! This is due to my kidney condition!" The boss huffed and turned away, "Keep up the crap, and Goro'maar will get the green flag to set disciplinary actions!"

Master Chief chuckled at the idea, "This squirt? As if anything he could do to me could be called discipline!"

The Arbiter mopped the aisle, finishing up the end of aisle 6 by himself, as he looked upwards in thought, "Complete at last. That was quite an endeavor." He leaned the mop to the side of the shelves at the end, "This might have been easier if only the Demon kept his mouth shut!"

"Oh **WOW**," Chief roared from across the shopping center among a

bunch of crates in the storage bay, "What **_**is**_** this even?!"

"Covenant delicacy, great food!" Goro'maar barked pointing downward from a high platform above, "Just a little stinky!"

"**You don't sayâ€|?!**" Chief shouted all saturated in sarcasm, "...and that's kind of funny coming from a runt who breaths methane in order to live. Way to basically breathe farts for a lifetime."

"Silence! Get to work!"

"But this stuff smells so horrifically bad though!"

"It's punishment for being a stupid head!" Goro'maar exclaimed with a high pitched squeal, "Goro want all unpacked and vacuum sealed for customers! Quick!"

"Pshâ€| I'll vacuum seal you, you little filthyâ€|" he muttered under his breath.

"You talking to Goro?"

"No, nothing! I'll get right to it!" Chief responded in an artificially obedient tone.

"Good! Then no more talk Demon, unpack!" Goro'maar turned away and left out of view from the high platform.

Chief turned back to the boxes and muttered to himself, "Oh you have no idea what I'd love to do right about nowâ€|"

"I have an ideaâ€|" Cortana responded nervously.

Chief walked up the boxes, before recoiled at the open one closest to him, "Good lord!" He choked up a little, approaching the box with his head turned away as if it would make a difference. "The stench is even penetrating my helmet!"

"Kind of makes me glad I can't smell anything," Cortana commented with a chuckle.

"Yea, how about shut up," he grunted looking up slightly, "The fumes are even going to corrode my visor."

"Well, if you had kept your mouth shut, you'd be alright now wouldn't you?"

"Wow, thanks mom, I'll keep that in mind," Chief grumbled before gagging slightly at the stench of the boxes full of purple and green slimyâ€| whatever they were. "What the hell! They're even viler up close!"

"Have fun, Chief!"

Master Chief clubbed himself in the helmet, "Enough from you! I've got a conscience already, thank you. It's enough voices in my head making me feel like crap for what I did."

"As if your conscience is telling you ****anything ****that'll make you feel bad about what you did!"

Master Chief straightened up for a moment to think before responding, "Hmâ€| you're right. The guy's fat, there's nothing wrong with fact."

"Chiefâ€| Just package this stuff already, I may not be able to smell it, but that image in the box there is unsettling, even to an artificial intelligence unit like me."

"Yea yeaâ€| I gotcha."

The Arbiter walked out from the aisles slowly, and took a seat onto one of the steel benches lining the shopping center walls near the entrance. In his left hand he had a small plastic bag, which he cautiously supported with both hands as he sat down.

After a moment of sitting silently on the bench with the bag resting in his two hands, he glanced left and right suspiciously, before slowly pulling out a small glass bottle. He popped off the cap and casually dropped a small bending straw into the opening at the neck of the bottle. After letting the straw sink into an apparent brown liquid, he pulled the bottle close to weave the straw between his mouth's appendages, then closing them over the straw's entire top section.

The Arbiter, pinching the bottle with his long fingers, hummed pleasantly to himself as he sipped up the liquid. After a few gulps, he held the bottle back in amazement, "How did I ever live without this peculiar human liquid known as 'chocolate milk.'"

"Lazy!" a high pitched echoed across the floor from a distance, as the Arbiter noticed the small grunt, Goro, charging towards him with his arm pointed towards him. "Layyyyyy-****zeeeeee!****"

The Arbiter grunted unenthusiastically without moving from his seat, as he awaited the charging grunt. "Good times seem to be spoiled now."

A long moment later after the Arbiter finished his bottle of milk, Goro finally arrived to his seat after a pathetically slow dash across, huffing and puffing from all the shouting he had done. "Youâ€| you areâ€|"

"Lazy. Yes, you made such a fact quite clear little one." The Arbiter grunted before looking around curiously, "Where is the Demon?"

"What do you care?!" the grunt scoffed, straightening himself out and rearranging the methane tank on his back.

"I do not care for the Demon himself! I just find his support valuable to my own goals is allâ€|" the Arbiter responded in embarrassment.

Goro grunted in suspicion, "Sureâ€| I have no idea where your best friend went, Heretic."

The Arbiter choked up in offended embarrassment, "Heâ€| he is not my friend! We are only co-workers and allies in completing out cleaning activities!"

Goro'maar bantered, "Oh, no mean to offend uptight Heretic! No need to hide true _**feelings!**_"

"**Feelings that are not mine!**"

Goro'maar just walked away laughing to himself seeming very entertained, "Fine then unconvincing Heretic! Just get to work, soon!"

When the little grunt was out of view, the Arbiter just cringed and raised his arms above his head to give his irritated trademark war cry.

Master Chief looked up from a box with pink and purple snot like goo dripping from his visor, "Hmâ€| that cry of resentment and plain dislike sounds real familiar."

"Who **else** would it be Chief?" Cortana responded in an exhausted tone.

"Yea, the A-man really needs to pick a better way to express his frustration. Don't think he understands how booming his voice can be."

"A-manâ€|?"

"Yea, good new nick-name isn't it?"

"Iâ€| I suppose," Cortana responded half-heartedly.

"Oh come on, Cortie, nick names aren't thatâ€|"

"Wait wait, what?" she interrupted.

"Huh?"

"Cortieâ€|!?"

"Yea, I thoughtâ€|"

"Oh no. Oh _hell_ no, Chief. I can deal with some things, you jumping out of ships with me in your head, leaving me with the Gravemindâ€| but please, spare me the nick names!"

"Wow! Way to spoil my fun, Cortana," Chief said before lashing back from the crate, "Oh man, I'm starting to taste it nowâ€| hmmmâ€| not bad."

"Just finish up already!"

"What's with you today? You need to relax before you blow a transistor or something." Cortana could only groan in frustration to herself, "Oh yeaâ€| how does it feel to be the one getting lectured now?"

"Shut up and get to work!"

"Melonsâ€¦ What a silly looking source of for sustenance," the Arbiter muttered to himself, rotating a small cantaloupe in front of himself in his left hand. He began knocking on the outer husk lightly as if he were an infant learning, still fascinated by the hard and rough textured fruit. "If I could see what's insideâ€¦" Goro glanced over to notice the Arbiter's actions as he was wandering by the fruit aisle.

"What're you doing to _**my**_ fruit!?"

"I am merely examining the consistency of the products in this 'fruit' aisle." Placing the melon back into the basket in a convincing fashion to conceal his curiosity, he reported in an excessively serious tone, "All spheres of sustenance are the correct density and shape to be suitable for consumption for strange human beings, as far as I've noticed."

Goro'maar began to narrow his tiny colored eyes skeptically, "I'm watching you Hereticâ€¦ You stink of lies." He took a few steps by the Arbiter before coming to a halt, only to lash around with his stubby arm directed towards the eight foot elite, "â€¦and no ruin any fruit!"

The Arbiter growled to himself as he watched the grunt turn away and walk out of sight. "As if I would be so clumsy," he muttered as he plucked two melons from the rack with each hand, "I do not make mistakes."

"Psh, I know. You're one stubborn alien bastard I remembered."

The Arbiter turned around with the melons still in his hands, curious to see who was barking at him. Then suddenly he dropped both melons from his hands, letting them crash to the ground in a crack and splash, "It is you!"

"Damn right it is, ugly," Sergeant Johnson belted standing in the aisle in a long bright green trench coat and a cigar wedged between his teeth, "I knew that pain in the ass worked here, but I never thought you'd be here too. Looks like you and John have gotten to be real buddies since I've been gone."

"I am not thisâ€¦ 'buddies' with the Demon! And you foul-mouthed human, I thought you had perished back on the final ring! There is no plausible explanation for this!"

"Yea, well as you like to say big guy, 'we're it so easy.' I couldn't even explain it even if I tried." Johnson

The Arbiter continued momentarily before cutting himself off to look the Sergeant up and down. "What is with the peculiar attire, human?"

"It is not 'peculiar' attire," he mocked in response, "and I have my reason, a brotha' has to look his best when making it to the top. And

****you****," he roared back, "what is with the no-attire?! It was hard enough seeing your leathery, wrinkly hide between your armor before, now I've got to see you in the nude?"

The Arbiter glanced down in confusion before looking back up with a clueless expression, "Does my body irritate you?"

"You're damn right it does, too bad my stylist isn't here; we'd take good care of you. You're screamin' out for help nudie."

As the two continued their exchange, Goro'maar walked by again only to halt in his tracks and jump back in irritation, "Rah! Look what you did to my melons Heretic!"

The Arbiter turned around to look at Goro'maar, then turned back to look down at the now smashed melons he had dropped. Johnson stepped to his side to look around the Arbiter and get a look at Goro'maar stomping over towards the two, as he blurted out with a puff of smoke, "Who the hell is that pimple?"

3. Starting The New War

****Without War****

Chapter 3: Starting the New Fight

Johnson sat on a bench holding his sides as he laughed in a derisive tone and an obnoxious volume. The Arbiter stood still in front of the bench, glaring down at the amused pimp-suit-wearing former General with an irritated look on his face. Goro'maar stood off to the side nodding confidently with a smug grunt of affirmation.

"I figured you good for nothings would end up pushing papers at some office or whatever, but a supermarket!?" Johnson continued to laugh out loud.

"Is pathetic, yea?" Goro'maar cut in, pointing up to the bothered alien. "Stupid good-for-nothings work for _me!_"

"Filthy humanâ€|" the Arbiter whispered, leaned over Johnson, "I request that you refrain from making this more difficult for me than it already is."

"Oh lighten up ugly," he reassured while condescendingly patting the Arbiter's thigh, still seated on the bench, "We can't all have the love and admiration that I get. This world has winners and losers, and you and the Chief just outdid yourself in the loser business!"

"You calledâ€|" Master Chief said sauntering in from behind an aisle.

"Ah, Chief, there you areâ€|" he said before taking a closer look. Johnson scanned up and down, focusing mainly on the bright orange apron that Master Chief was sporting. "Uhâ€|" nice apron."

"Shut up, what are you doing here? Did you come here to gloat?"

"Now now, Chief, that's no way to talk to a long time friend, I just

came to check on your one-ton-ass."

"Well I'm splendid, once you get past the smell of rotten food and Arby's BOâ€¦"

"BO? What is this 'BO' you say I possess?"

Johnson dropped his head and shook it helplessly trying not to laugh, "Don't worry about it big guy, it's not important."

"**Hey!**" Goro'maar cut in, "Sorry to break up failure reunion, but two bums have work to do for _me!_"

"Eh, quiet squirt, can't you see the adults are talking?" Johnson responded, pulling out a cigar and popping it into his mouth.

"Who you call squirtâ€¦!" Goro'maar roared as, Johnson lit the cigar ignoring the barking grunt to his left. "**No smoking in store!**"

"Hush, I can't hear myself think with the crap from you cloggin' my ears," he grunted blowing a burst of smoke back at Goro'maar, drawing him to cough uncontrollably. "You guys hear my new album by the way?"

"Album? What would this be Demon?" the Arbiter asked as Goro'maar began pacing back and forth in the background, grunting to himself in an angry tone.

Ignoring the angry Grunt in the background, Chief sighed, "I told you to stop calling me that." He leaned back and shook his head, "and it's music, all on a card or whateverâ€¦ people with nothing better to do buy them to listen to it." He looked over to Johnson, "and no, I don't like to buy music or listen to the radio."

"Tin head, you don't know what you missin'. My hit tracks 'Stuck His Ass' and 'Teabaggin' It' are just pure brilliance. I impress myself even this time around."

"I'm sure you do, butâ€¦ if you're so hot like you say you are then what are you doing here anyways? I was ripped when I found out you lived from that blast back on the Ark, **then** I found out you got back to Earth and became a multiplatinum rap artist before I was found floating in space, and **now** I'm here enduring your ridiculeâ€¦!" Chief demanded.

"I'm your new co-working fellas, in fact I'm gonna be all'a'yo assesâ€¦ _brand new_ boss," Johnson blurted out abruptly. Master Chief and the Arbiter stood still staring in to him without saying anything with expressions of disbelief. "Even you!" he blurted out lashing out a small pimp cane out of his sleeve in the direction of the now mortified grunt.

"**What?!**"

"You heard straight, tater tot! You're all in Johnson's house now!"

"After all of these years, just to end up caught under his command againâ€¦" Chief reminisced regrettably.

"Surely it should not be that detrimental to our well being, correct deâ€| Jonathan?" the Arbiter asked looking over naively.

Master Chief turned his head slightly and looked up to the heavens, "You have no ideaâ€|"

"How could I lose power?! I just start! I cannot believeâ€|! - " Goro muttered to himself while pacing back and forth in the background.

"First things first," Johnson barked out, "Our ****lovely**** employer has given us a brand new opportunity for obtaining some obviously needed motivation in this dung hole."

"Motivationâ€|?" Chief spouted, "With all due disrespect sir, I epitomize motivation."

"Shut your ugly bionic face, Chief, we all know you birthday-suit over there could give a rats-ass and your two large testicles about this shopping center."

"Hmmâ€| point takenâ€|"

"Waitâ€| Youâ€| you humans are capable of bestowing your reproductive organs?" the Arbiter asked ignorantly, although genuinely shocked. Both Chief and Johnson looked over for a moment in silent disbelief, before just continuing as if he never asked.

"Anyways, you guys, and myself will from now on be eligible forâ€|"

"â€|More rolls of company toilet paper in the faculty thrones?" Chief cut in.

"No, we're being set up forâ€|"

"Specific ****froooooot**** managing duties?!" Goro'maar shot up, shouting in excitement.

"Whatâ€|? No, shut up! We're being put in a contest to winâ€|"

"â€|A life-time supply of magnificent liquid, you humans call, 'Chocolate milk?'" the Arbiter shot in dangling a bottle in front of Johnson's face with glitter in his black alien eyes.

"No damn it! All of you clowns and even myself, are all eligible for the chance to win employee of the month from here on. As a matter of fact, all employees in the place are eligible. The first winner of this award is to be given at the end of this week." Johnson stated, reading from a folded paper he had pulled out of his pimp suit.

Chief stared at him for a moment before slowly picking up laughter, as the Arbiter, slightly confused progressively began laughing.

Then the Arbiter halted his laughter abruptly with an extremely sudden and serious expression/tone, "Why are we engaging in laughter again, Johnathan?"

"It's nothing, it's just this whole employee of the month thing is a waste of time," Chief grumbled crossing his arms.

The Arbiter looked forward after a quick thought, "I agree, there is indeed no benefit in engaging in competition with one another."

"Competition?" Chief scoffed abruptly, "Any competition with me involved is no contest, since I'm going to win by a landslide."

"Chief what are you doing?!" Cortana pleaded suddenly from inside Chief's helmet.

Each person one around the group stared back vacantly, while Johnson huffed in amusement. "So the situation has lead to this, demon," the Arbiter grunted while straightening himself out as Goro'maar stood still for a moment before breaking into a screaming panic.

With the grunt running around behind them, Chief stood tall, "What if it is?"

Master Chief and the Arbiter stood of from one another, shooting clashing stares at one another as if a violent storm raged in between them. "Alright alright you two, settle this business in the store floor, we're not here start another fight now!" Johnson pleaded from their side.

"This will be no mere fightâ€|" the Arbiter grunted.

"â€|this is war," Chief continued, walking by the Arbiter staring down the Arbiter's motionless stare as he walked by.

Johnson watched as Master Chief walked away, before looking back at the all-serious Arbiter reassuringly, "Ah, don't sweat it big guy, you don't need to worry about the Chief for winning Employee of the Month."

"What makes you so sure filthy human."

"Well that's because I'm going to win it stinky, so you might as well quit now!" he shouted out laughing obnoxiously as he adjusted his pimp-coat collar and walked away.

"Were it so easy, human filthâ€|" he growled to himself, while taking a random sip of chocolate milk. "You will see the wrath of my efficiency." The Arbiter stomped his way down the aisle he was closest to and out of view, leaving the area tranquil for onceâ€|aside from the sound of a wheezing gas mask.

"Oh fools indeedâ€| Goro will show you all, and be top again!" the small grunt sneakily muttered, acting freakishly hunched over to be Smeagoling it up. "Be the top definitely, you will see!" Suddenly, an explosion in the distance rang across the shopping center. Booms and the sounds of scattering produce pattered quietly as Goro stood up startled from the sounds. "Oh! Oh! So quickly it begins!"

Closer up near the poultry and meat section of the supermarket, Master Chief strutted quietly as he left the scene of destruction behind him.

"Chief!" Cortana shouted in distress, "Chief what has gotten into you!"

"Pure skill and ownage that's what, I've got it all flowing out my finger-tips you know," he responded smugly, holding his hands out. "This employee of the month thing is all mine, at this rate!"

"CHIEF! You just sabotaged that poor bag boy in aisle 13! You're supposed to win the honor by being the best employee in the shopping center, and you're blowing the place up!"

A small piece of ceiling plummets to the ground behind them in a smash and crash of glass as Chief stood there quietly for a moment before responding, "â€| So?"

"So, how do you expect to be the best employee if you're demolishing the place!" she pleaded with him in a seemingly calm but annoyed tone.

"Oh Cortana, keep focused with me here. See, if I kill or chase off all of the employees in the supermarket, I'm instantly employee of the month! It's a fail-proof plan you see?" Chief suggested holding his hand out in front of him while looking up as if he were talking to himself.

"â€|Chief. I don't know where to start with that logic." But before she could continue, screams from the far end of the meat section roared out as a large band of employees barreled out of a distant aisle screaming for their lives. Chief took a serious glare down towards the commotion as Cortana sighed, "Don't tell meâ€|"

The Arbiter stomps out of the aisle as the people dispersed around him frantically. He came out palming the face of a teenage male supermarket employee, holding him up high as the kid screamed into his alien palm. Under his other arm pit was another female employee screaming and kicking furiously, as the 8 foot tall alien struck terror into the employees.

"Excellentâ€| I'll have Arby do all my dirty work for me," Chief muttered emotionlessly.

Cortana sighed, "You guys really don't see what's so ****very wrong**** with all of this?"

"Yea I know right? He isn't even killing them!" Master Chief added cheerfully.

"Chiefâ€|"

Before long, Arbiter looked down towards Master Chief with a glower and shouted from the top of his lungs, "****Demon!****" while tossing the male shop worker into a shelf of potato chips like a ragdoll.

"Oh boy, this is feeling nostalgic," Master Chief said twiddling his fingers in anticipation.

"Chief, might I suggest a more passive approach to this conflict, maybe find another way to relieve you stress? Yoga and a hycolonc or

two might do the trick!"

"First of all Cortana, that's disgusting. Second, I'm not stressed. And lastly, I've got an employee of the year award to win." Chief stood up confidently, "This is for the good of the supermarket and all of mankind to have such a proud figurehead leading the path to glory in distribution of produce!"

"What?" Cortana muttered in disbelief, "What? Oh boy, Chief, that had to be the most dedicated although misguided thing you've said in awhile."

"I know," Master Chief responded with a sniffing that would go best with tears, "It's beautiful isn't it?"

Cortana groaned.

"Regardless, turns out that it looks like the big man is the one who could use the hycolon right about now," Master Chief pointed out in front of them, as the Arbiter lobbed the screaming girl under his arm into the meat rack in a heap.

"Chief! He looks pretty chapped, I think you should take off out of here and live to fight another day!" she pleaded as the angry alien stomped his way over.

"Cortana, why do you suggest anything that you know I will never do."

Cortana sighed, "Yea I guess it's pretty stupid of me to suggest. So should I brace for impact then?"

"Maybe," Chief replied in his trademark monotonic tone. "Fight's just begun."

4. Holey Guacamole!

Without War: Holey Guacamole!

"So was that worth it?" Cortana muttered smugly.

"Let's not talk about it anymore alright?" Master Chief retorted, as he swept up the moldy mess splashed all over the floor, with a sense of irritation and embarrassment. Entire shelves were laid on their side, with smashed jars and obliterated cardboard containers strewn in the aisle underneath them. Master Chief's demeanor was one that seemingly was ignoring the huge mess in front of him.

"Oh yea, the huge gaping hole left in the side of the super market is completely inconspicuous and is easily ignored! Wait, where did it go? I must have forgotten already!" Cortana barked sarcastically, as chunks of concrete debris crumbled loose from the expanse of a wide open wall.

"Well, I think the new breeze here is wonderful," Master Chief retorted cannily, "Consider it an upgrade."

Cortana groaned in agony, "Chief, really, why did you have to confront the Arbiter earlier? I mean, what'd you think would come out

of it?"

"I don't know, maybe a few melees here and thereâ€¦ Maybe even an assassination..."

"â€¦But instead you manage to blow a hole in the wallâ€¦"

"Hah, that was a pretty good one right? Tie some propane tanks together from households and bam!" he clapped, "You have an over kill in the making, or maybe even aâ€¦"

"Please Chief! At least pretend like you're reflecting upon your actions!" Cortana interrupted insistently.

"Well it's in the past anyways! Which is why the past, is indeed the past!" Chief spouted out ignorantly before dropping his arms down, "Time to go home."

"Wait what? Home? It's not even 3 in the afternoon!" Cortana shouted in disbelief.

"Hah, do you think I wanna be here when the fat man comes back to see the hole in the wall? I don't think so! See?" Chief muttered condescendingly while tapping the helmet with his index finger, "You've got to think ahead at times like these," he scoffed condescendingly. "That's why I'm the hero who saved mankind, quick thinking and avoiding responsibility for my mistakes."

"Well, if I were in control of your body, this wouldn't even be an issue," she retorted in frustration.

"Yes yes, well don't worry about it Cortana. When tubby asks me tomorrow, I'll just blame it on Arby," he explained with pair of claps as if the answer were obvious, "Problem solved."

"Then the Arbiter will just blame you!"

"â€¦and who's he going to believe? That big naked alien who had led the armies that tried to eradicate mankind? Or me?"

Cortana sneered, "Well that's a tough decision, with your magnetism for mayhem and destruction."

"Oh hah, hah, hah Cortana. Please, give me some credit here." Chief tapped his visor a few times to bring up some information in his hud, "Well looks like I'll be walking home, just missed the Pony Express. Great."

"It could be worse, you know. I'm sure we can find a more decent way to get out of here."

"Yea well, Cortana, in all honesty you're not the one doing the traveling you free loading artificial intelligence system."

"I'm made of pure energy and I don't even have mass to free-load with!"

"Excuses, excuses!"

"Hey, Tin Man, you look like you're about to bounce, you need a

ride?" Johnson shouted while walking up behind Master Chief.

Chief sighed with grief as he turned himself around, "Look, the last thing I need is need you rubbing your fancy vehicles up in my face, just because you're rapping as MC Johnson or whatever you are called."

"That's Sar-Jay, Chief. Don't you ever watch MTV?"

Cortana chuckled in Chief's helmet, "That's right Chief, I thought you were up on your chart smashing hits."

"As if MTV plays music anymore. That pimp hat seems a little tight. It must be cutting off the circulation to your brain. And in reference to your offer," he said tilting his head back down toward the pimped-out Sergeant, "I reject, emphatically."

Johnson scoffed in amusement, "Well I see how it is, your loss garbage can. Don't hate me for being a rousing success." Johnson threw up his lime green pimp-coat and popped his collar confidently, "But it's a good thing I've got an insurance policy."

"Insurance policy?" both Cortana and Chief choked up with a puzzled look.

"Yea, hey big man, you need a ride to wherever your charming kind, live?"

Chief arched back in horror and shock, as the Arbiter popped his head out from over the mangled grocery shelf in a childishly excited manner, "I would greatly appreciate transportation to my living quarters."

"Ouch!" Cortana poked, "Looks like you've been replaced on the list Chief!"

Master Chief felt offended, and let a small puff of steam out of the vents of his Mark VI armor. "Wait just a second here, you're not going to replace the _Chief_ with this guy," Chief grumbled in disbelief and aggravation, "You're talking about going from having an entourage, to driving the short bus. You're taking ****me**** home, move along Arby."

"What! He had just requested that I join him on his departure, not you, indecisive and pompous Demon!" the Arbiter shouted before effortlessly walking through the shelf, as the metal tore and creaked, tossing the remaining products to the ground.

Cortana could only groan at the continued demolition of the supermarket property.

"Well he's taking me now, so tough luck man... thing. Heroes before zeroes."

"You are the zero, Demon! I will be departing with this flamboyant human, not you!"

Johnson launched back in surprise, "Flamboyant?"

Chief chuckled lightly, "Poor delusional Arby, didn't you learn from

my cluster bomb earlier? Who's the man here? I am."

"Relax, relax you two with your nincompoopery! There's space for both of your big asses!" Johnson declared, poking each of the two with his jewel-encrusted pimp cane.

"In-that-case-shotgun!" Chief barked out very quickly, pumping his fist in victory after, trotting past Johnson as he watched him walk by.

"The only shotgun you shall receive is the one I shall plunge into your loathsome face, Demon!"

"Wah, wah, baby Arbiter wants his botttttttle," Chief coaxed from a distance as he continued to walk away.

Outside the shopping center, the three emerged from the smoldering and gaping hole in the side of the supermarket, as if it were intended to be a portcullis from the very beginning. Rubble from the hole continued to spill down the sides as Master Chief blissfully ignored the horrible conditions he was leaving the place in.

"Ah," he states upon cresting the rubble hill to see the one vehicle that had not been completely crushed by the debris in the VIP section of the parking lot. "A Revenant? They make these things for consumers now?"

"This is a fine vehicle, Demon. You are jealous of our fine engineering techniques, no?" the Arbiter added as he approached from behind.

"Pfft, as if. You know the fuchsia really brings out the best in your race's masculinity," Chief quipped with an intentionally obvious sarcastic tone.

"Gender attacks Chief? That's just too easy with the Covey, you should be ashamed!" Sergeant Johnson barked from atop the hill of rubble, having a significantly harder time climbing up than the others. He deliberately continued to keep his climb deliberate, keeping his slick pimp coat as clean as possible.

"I wonder could this be?" Chief exclaimed suddenly.

"Oh no! Don't even think about it Chief!" Cortana pleaded.

The Arbiter straightened himself up and looked down at the craft with glowing beady black eyes, "This would be our infuriating and wretched supervisor's mode of transportation!"

Both Master Chief and the Arbiter glared at the vehicle, apparently on the same wavelength in terms of sinister ideas.

Cortana belted out over Chief's loud speakers, "Now I know you guys don't like the guy!"

"The correct verb for the emotions I hold for this individual would be 'abominate'" the Arbiter cut in quickly.

"That's not the point! Don't you two have any regard for the repercussions of doing anything to mess with your supervisor?"

A moment of silence ensued as the two looked at the vehicle, and then each other.

"Are you two proud of yourselves?" Cortana grumbled from the speakers on Chief's helmet.

"Extremely," Chief nodded from the passenger's seat of Sergeant Johnson's personal civilian class Warthog, which currently was barreling down the highway. The Warthog, was as flashy and shimmering as Sergeant Johnson himself, painted entirely lime green with an excessive amount of decals placed at every flat surface of the warthog. Most of the decals were of money, gemstones, lewd shots of women, and Johnson's own face â€" different expressions with every location.

"Such retribution was justified for such an insignificant runt," the Arbiter added, taking up the entire back section of the Warthog, popping his head between Johnson and Chief's seats to be head through the bustling winds.

"That poor guy, I wonder what he's going to do now!" Cortana muttered woefully and compassionately.

Chief cackled in response, "Yea I wonderâ€¦!"

"***GASP*** **Oh no! My precious Revvy, what has happened to you!*" Goro'maar wept, as he tumbled himself up to the barely recognizable vehicle. The once pristine and impressive Revenant, now looked like a huge white Twinkie, completely covered in what looked and smelled to be shaving cream.

Goro'maar wiped off some of the cream, jerking his head away in disgust, "Whew! This disgusting foam stinks!" Although, despite his utter distress over his car, the sound of rocks falling drew his attention as he looked up at the smoldering hole he somehow managed to miss at first glance. "***ooooOOOh!*" he grunted in a high pitched and shocked tone, recoiling in disbelief at the sight before him. "Big fat human boss, coming back soon! Goro in charge of maintaining facilities! **Goro is in BIG BIG trouble! YAHHHHH!*" he wailed as he ran away from the supermarket, flailing his arms in such a recognizable fashion.

"â€¦Oh I wonder," Chief continued, nodding in pleasure of the almost guaranteed distress he had left behind for his pitiful Grunt supervisor.

"You take too much pleasure in the pain of others, don't you Chiefâ€¦?" Cortana hissed.

"Now, now, Cortanaâ€¦ Let it be known that I only take pleasure in being this awesome. But on that note, Johnson, you have any music in this thing that I can play in order to divert the attention from the current topic at hand?"

Cortana choked up, "At least pretend not to be obnoxious!"

"Ohâ€¦ Chief, I'm glad you asked! What would the Sar-Jay mobile be, without my number one record on board?" Johnson exclaimed, holding up a small plastic card with his face on it, fully endowed with what

appeared to be an impressively shiny platinum grill in his teeth.

"Oh boyâ€¦ brace yourself Arby, this might melt your ear holesâ€¦ Earth rap is nothing to covet from our race."

"Hush up, Chief, and prepare to hear the best jam you'll have the pleasure of listening to. This one's called 'What The Ladies Like'."

As Johnson popped in the card into his dashboard, he followed by banging his cane stylishly to start the playback. The speakers become endowed with a thick and electronic beat immediately, having been suitably cranked up by the smug Sar Jay.

Hey all you maggots, welcome to the Sar Jay Show,_

Only place where all you bitches get to hear that flow,

Figure me gone countless times, goin' out in flames,

_Only to rise from those ashes, bitches I'm __**back**__ again!_

Alien bastards came to town, trying to run my show,

_Don't even know __**why**__ they even had to come here fo',_

Leadin' my legions of soldiers, kickin' ass and takin' names,

All while babysittin' a pain in the ass, big tin can!

Yea, "Master Chief, blah blah blah, did this and that,"

Yea, with a bullet-proof helmet, while all I had was a hat!

I'd be nice to have a bullet proof shield while you're saving the world,

While in conditions that leave soldiers keeling over to hurl,

_But not Sar Jay, no way, uh uh, no __**chance**__,_

I dive my ass in, and take control of this dance!

_Cause __I bring the all of the style to the UNSC, _

Fightin' a war to keep you helpless bitches safe and free!

Cause I'm Sar Jay, A-vizzle, A Double J and Boss,

Call me whatever you like, ain't gonna matter, hoss (horse)!

_Cause the most rootenist, tootenist, "Just shut up and shoot"-enist badass mutha this world __**ever**__ will see._

I fight the good fight, and I do it in style,

_Figure all of you could stand back and watch this shit for a while, _

I'm a beautiful man, I get them all standing in glee.

_Cause I know__ just what the ladies like, and that would be me._

_Now haters, don't get bent out of shape, get all moody, _

It only reminds me of all that time I spent with the alien nudey.

_Another chump that you confused people figure savin' the day, _

Strutting his big ass self around in ugly purple and gray.

_Watchin' after these two nincompoops, and all the mayhem around em, _

I'm the only sorry bastard without his own special anthem!

_There's no respect for Johnson, just no love for the leader, _

Just labeled as support along with the other bottom feeders!

_But don't let that crap fool you, I'm still a lot of folks' fav, _

_Cause when I die, I'll take you wit__h me with a kill from the grave!_

_When I die over and over, it don't matter what ends, _

_I'll__ just come back from the dead, just to up and kill all your friends!_

_I'm too valuable a sucka to be killed like a foo, _

I bring the fire to all the legendary things that I do!

"_Come here you ugly bastard, a plasma nade for your face!"_

_*Sizzle, __**BOOM***__ Score another one for the fierce human race!_

_Cause I'm Sar Jay, A-vizzle, A Double J and Boss, _

Call me whatever you like, ain't gonna matter, hoss (horse)!

_Cause the most rootenist, tootenist, "Just shut up and shoot"-enist badass mutha this world __**ever**__ will see._

_I fight the good fight, and I do it in style, _

_Figure all of you could stand back and watch this shit for a while, _

I'm a beautiful man, I get them all standing in glee.

Cause I know just what the ladies like, and that would be me.

Master Chief sat there in his seat staring through his visor in confusion, unsure what to think of what he was listening to, as Sergeant Johnson continued to bob his to his own music.

"You like that bad ass beat, don't you Chief?" Johnson gloated, pounding the steering wheel to the beat at the end of the song as it tailed off to the end.

"What was that auditory abortion that I had the great displeasure of tolerating out of courtesy for this flamboyant human?" the Arbiter asked in all seriousness from behind.

"Stop calling me 'flamboyant' leather face!" Johnson barked back.

"Oh c'mon, you know you could never be courteous, Arby â€" Your gorilla like kind don't know how to be something nice like that," Chief quipped, waving his hand in a dismissing fashion.

"Do you wish to be consuming that dashboard, Demon bastard?"

"And Johnson," Chief continued, completely ignoring the Arbiter's empty threats from the back seat, "That was awfulâ€" simply awful!" Chief seemed very pleased with himself, in the pleasant and buttery tone of his criticisms.

"Alsoâ€" what is this about my pigment being considered this word, 'ugly'" the Arbiter grunted, "I am offended, and would squish your head like a grape, had you not been offering my transportation."

"Yea!" Chief added, "All that stuff you said was simply not true! None of it. Well, actually all the stuff about Arby seems pretty spot on, but other than that, nothing."

"Chief, stop stirring up people's hostility in such high speed and confined areas please!" Cortana pleaded, feeling the killing intent rising from the two who were being burned by the crass commentary Master Chief had for the both of them.

"As I said before, don't hate me for being a great success. Remember this you two, number â€" one â€"hit," Johnson pointed out, gesturing each of the final three words.

Although as he wrapped up his blabber, a sudden siren bellowed from behind the vehicle, as a local causeway patrol vehicle flew up behind the vehicle.

"Ah, the fuzz?" Chief choked up turning back in shock.

"Fuzz, what are you a teenager? You're supposed to be the Master Chief!" Cortana barked.

"What the heck, Johnson, are you speeding?" Chief shouted as he peered over to the dash and took a peek at the speedometer console.
"335 k/hr?"

"Of course, I'm not a snail on the road, Chief. I've got places to be!"

"I was curious as to why it was so breezy in the cockpit of this vehicle," Arbiter commented in a serious attempt to sound logical.

"Oh man!" Chief slumped into his chair, crossing his arms in a child-like fashion, as Johnson pulled the glittery Warthog to the side of the road.

"Cool it Tin Man, I'll handle this. I'm a celebrity of course, we get free passes!"

As Johnson fixed his collar, he reached into his glove box and took out an outrageous pair of lime green matching sunglasses to put on. Up the side, the officer in the patrol vehicle sauntered his way with a confident swagger up the side, tapping the side of the vehicle as a form of intimidation, glaring at the decals and decorative paint job.

"So, Mr. Flashy pants, you late for an important date or something?"

Looking up Johnson immediately recognized the face before him,
"What? What the hell, Buck? Eddie Buck?"

"Hey! No one calls me Eddie, it's just Buck! Wait!" the officer stuttered, "Is that you? Avery Johnson? Sergeant Johnson?"

"Ah! Gunnery Sergeant Eddie Buck!"

"Uh! It's just Buck, but that's okay! How have you been doing sir?" he exclaimed patting the flashy Johnson on his shoulder.

"Oh quite alright, I'm sure you've heard of me around the airwaves."

"Oh of course I have, you'd have to be living under a rock, or be a completely lame unhip loser to not know of Sar Jay."

Johnson, smirked and promptly leaned his head back towards Master Chief and the Arbiter in a suggestive manner.

"Oh please, I'd much rather be completely unaware about music like that anyways," Chief huffed, looking straight ahead with an aura of irritation about him. "I might damage what's left of my human ears with such an auditory onslaught."

"Hey, wise guy over there. Have some respect for the talent of Sar Jay! Do you know who this man is? He's a legend that you should esteem and adore!"

"Glad to know I get my due respect from **some** people," harped while pushing his sunglasses back onto the ridge of his nose in a

smug fashion.

"Hmâ€¦ Wait a secondâ€¦" Buck stopped, leaning over to get a better look, "You look a little different from your run of the mill Spartanâ€¦"

"Oh, I'm just that obviously overlooked legend that ****you**** should be esteeming and adoring," Chief grunted haughtily.

"Human law enforcer, are you truly not familiar with the exploits of Jonathan?" the Arbiter asked, leaning in from the back.

Buck recoiled at the sight of the Elite's mandibles flapping around before him, obviously not used to the up close interaction with the former enemy. "Uh, Jonathan? Who's that?" Buck asked, seeming confused more by the name than whether he recognized him or not.

"Yes Arby, who's this Jonathan you speak of? No one here goes by that name, remember?" Master Chief noted, pointing up underneath the alien's mouth.

"Jonathan? You mean you're John-117? Master Chief?"

"Oh so you do know of me then?"

"Of course I have! You're pretty famous you know!"

Master Chief leaned back and grabbed his helmet's visor confidently, "Well ain't that the truth." Chief chuckled to himself, taking in the praise pompously.

"You're a sure bet to make all of the history books, that for sure. Now I can say I met a hero!" Buck huffed before breaking out in laughter, having been legitimately impressed.

"Whoa, wait a second, what do you mean history?" Chief cut in, turning his head in a jerking motion.

"History books, John. You know, those places where has-beens are written about for the things they did, that no one remembers."

Master Chief tilted his head in the direction of Johnson, with only the glare of his helmet's mask giving off the aura of irritation.

"What? Don't blame me for pointing out the fact that you're about as memorable to these people as my morning bowel movement. Only difference is you don't smell quite as bad."

"Ouch! Oh wait, what's that sound â€" I think it's your ego going up in flames, Chief!" Cortana joked.

Tapping his helmet and brushing off the commentary from Johnson, "Keep quiet in there."

The Arbiter in the back began chuckling under his breath in entertainment, "I express laughter because this is true. The Demon, indeed, closely resembles human fecal matter!"

"Now that's it! I can take you and Johnson having fun at this hero's expense" but not this guy back here with a sense of humor as thin as Powderpipe brand, single ply toilet paper."

"Ah Chief, that's impressive! You seem quite knowledgeable of your toiletries," Johnson added, "I see all the experience in the field at the Elysium City Shopping Centre" tailing off into restrained laughter, "is coming into good use!"

Master Chief glared at Johnson through his visor with a tailing grunt of frustration.

Buck, finishing off his laughter at the expense of the now quieted Spartan in the passenger seat, he pulled out his notepad still chuckling, "So do you guys have any idea of how fast you were going?"

Sergeant Johnson straightened up, "Uh Maybe 120 km/hr or so."

Buck looked back for a moment before laughing, "Oh that's a good one sir, indeed it is!" Buck shook his head, still smiling as he scribbled into his notepad studiously. Before Johnson could say anything in his defense, Buck ripped the ticket out of his pad and handed it over, "Sorry sir, but you were going three times the limit. Wish I could overlook it, but the bright colored blur down the highway was pretty hard to miss"

"No worries," Johnson commented plucking the ticket from Buck's hand, "I'll have one of my many bankers take care of this."

But as Buck tucked his notepad away, while Johnson rearranged himself in his seat in preparation to leave, Buck's radio attached to his shoulder blurted out a dispatch report. "_Attention all units, reports of an explosion at 48 Magnacion Highway - location the __Elysium City Shopping Centre__" All units report, there are suspects that fled the scene in" *laughter* what appears to be a bejeweled, lime green Warthog"

Sergeant Johnson grumbled, "It's not bejeweled dammit, these are real pure cut diamonds!" before he suddenly shut himself up, seeing Buck staring them down in the car. "Oops."

"We're going to prison, aren't we?" Cortana whimpered.

5. By The Mechanical Balls

****Without War: By the Mechanical Balls****

"What's that smell?" Sergeant Johnson commented, sitting on a steel bench against the wall, still donning his bright, lime-green colored suit.

"Oh I don't know, but I'm fairly certain it's that bucket of piss and crap in the corner over there," Master Chief pointed out casually, sitting across the way from Johnson.

"Well in that case" ****Hey!**** Johnson shouted out, "Can one of you

please clean this thing out? My nose hairs are almost lighting on fire over here!"

"Keep quiet in there," an obese officer barked from what seemed to be a light blue barrier. "I can't smell anything through this barrier, so I don't know **what you're talking about.**" The officer smiled smugly and took a large bite of his pastry, which in itself was about the size of a football, and oozing with an obviously unhealthy cream filling.

"â€|You fat bastard," Johnson mumbled under his breath, as he looked away seeing the Arbiter seemingly a little uneasy. "You know, leatherhead, you should probably relax. All that heavy breathing and grunting is making me feel uncomfortable, if you catch my drift."

"Butâ€| That creamy liquidâ€| That rich creamy liquid!" the Arbiter grumbled, with a nervous desperation.

"â€|Now you're **really** making me feel uncomfortable," Johnson muttered leaning back as far as his could.

"That deliciousâ€| what do you call itâ€| 'Chocolate milk'â€| I must have some!" the Arbiter continued, twiddling his long fingers out in front of him as if he wished to have a cold bottle in his hands.

"Looks like Arby's having some withdrawal," Chief commented, with not one sliver of compassion in his tone.

"Well that's sure a surprise for the guy to like such a drink," Johnson pointed out before looking towards the Arbiter, "If you should get addicted to anything, it should probably be Heinricker's Cognac." Leaning back, "Sar-J could use a glass of **that **right about now."

"Yea, well I think you actually need a tall glass of 'shut the hell up'. Now me, I could use some 'lets me the hell out of this dump right now'!" Chief lashed back, in an erratic and thoughtless manner.

"â€|That's it? That's the best you have Chief?" Cortana echoed after a small pause rang through the room.

"Well that was simply, awful response," Johnson grumbled with a slightly amused chuckle as he stood up from the bench.

"Quiet both of you!" Chief retorted, turning away and crossing his arms, "There must be a way out of this placeâ€|"

"How about you stay here, and lament your actions Chief! This could be a good time for an important lesson in the **rules**â€| of **society**!" Cortana shouted, broadcasting to everyone in the cell.

"Your human society is filthy, and exists to be crushed. What benefits would exist for following such pathetic rules," the Arbiter rumbled.

"Hey now, cocoa-milk head â€" We're not that bad. But I will have to

agree, rules of society exist for poor and ugly people â€" both which I am not â€" of course. So it doesn't benefit me at all."

Cortana could only groan, as the three nodded in agreement that they had done nothing wrong, even though there was still a monstrous hole in the side of the shopping center as a result from their actions.

"I see you worthless turds are showing great remorseâ€|" a man growled from behind them.

Everyone turned back and saw the man standing behind the light barrier. "Ugh," Chief sighed, "Oh, look. It's Fatty McFat Fat."

"Shut it Robo-boy!"

"Robo-boy?" Chief responded, turning to the others with his arms raised in confusion.

"I'm not here to deal with any crap from those who had the courtesy of blowing a hole into the side of my shopping center!" their large supervisor barked with his arms crossed. "I've got you guys, right where I want you."

"You know, that holeâ€| it offers a spectacular opportunity for some positive renovations. So in a way, we should be thanked!" Chief pointed out, with his finger pointed upward.

"Shut your mechanical trap, Master **Grief**," he barked back.

Silence filled the cell, as the three looked around at each other.

"As dreadful as that was, the name was appropriate for you Jonathan," Arbiter suddenly spouted.

"Arbyâ€| shh!" Master Chief directed. "Soâ€| What are you here for, to gloat?"

"No I came to retrieve you guys, since I still employ you."

Master Chief jerked his head back to everyone and back to the smug looked boss, "Well how about that! Looks like me and Arby are getting sprung! Have a nice time in here Johnson!"

"Wait a damned second! I didn't do anything to deserve to rot in the hell hole, while these guys are walking after razed structures with improvised explosives!"

"Wellâ€|" the fat officer cut in, with a mouth full of gooey pastry, muffling his speech, "You did get caught driving three times the legal speed limit."

"â€| That's not important! I didn't blow up anything!"

"Well you're coming with me as well, celery stalk," he quipped pointing out his outfit.

"Hey, say what you want about me, but leave the jacket out of it!" Johnson retaliated.

"I'll say what I want, about all three of you as a matter of fact. You bone heads, now belong to me," he directed, pointing at all of them through the barrier. "And you wise-guy," her directed towards Chief, "I've got you by those mangled mechanical balls."

"Mangledâ€|?" chief leaned over, whispering to everyone in the cell.

"Ohâ€| splendid!" Cortana commented, oozing with sarcasm.

* * *

><p>"You know, I should just throw this spoiled jar of mayo into your face Chiefâ€| right, into your big, stupid cybernetic face!" Johnson complained, spiking the jar of green and white goo onto the floor â€" which will no longer be referred to as mayonnaise.<p>

"Hey relax," Master Chief responded with his hand held up defensively, now again wearing a simple apron. They were all back at the super market, still a mess, stomping around in rubble and smashed produce. "This will be a piece of cake."

Although, the word 'cake' resoundingly echoed through the large, and understandably empty supermarket, exemplifying the sheer size of the place â€" which was basically completely in shambles. With the sound of Chief's comment disappearing from the echo's repetition, small pieces of additional rubble fell from the walls. "Wellâ€| it'll just be a very large piece of cake."

"Kiss my meaty and voluptuous ass, Chief â€" right on the tattoo of myself on the left cheek," Johnson responded angrily, pointing his left hip towards Master Chief.

Chief recoiled, then crooked his head in bewilderment, "Waitâ€| you have a tattoo of yourself on your butt cheek?"

"Hey, I have so many people kissing my ass, I might as well treat them to a nice view, am I right?"

Master Chief stood there silent without a motion for a moment, before responding, "Nothing about your ass would constitute as 'nice'."

"Hello filthy humans," Arbiter called out, as he walked through another one of the few remaining shelves, sending all of the produce flying around as the metal of the shelf twisted and tore like tissue-paper. He looked around at all of the mess, including the stuff he just strewn about the floor from walking through the shelf, "Your designated area of sanitation is quite inadequate."

"Well, it'd be a lot easier to clean if we didn't have to clean after your giant alien worthlessness!" Johnson jarred off, grinding his teeth in frustration.

"My worth is substantial - unlike you, formally fashionable, and still pathetic human!"

Johnson gasped, "How dare you put my fashion into question!"

"Johnsonâ€¦" Chief commented from the side, looking off to the side, while blindly directing to Johnson's outfit. He was sporting a grody apron, with a soiled white t-shirt underneath, and a pair of dark blue sweat pants. "Sweat pants, huh?"

"Don't you look at me! Erase this data from your memory!"

"Well yea, Arby â€" you might want toâ€¦ I don't knowâ€¦ stop walking through the damn shelves all the time." Master Chief flicked at some of the twisted metal, "I don't think Mickey D's will like to see you busting up his precious store."

"**No waste any more time!**" a tiny voice belted, as the trio looked up to the top of the shelf to see Goro'maar perched atop the shelves, pointing a box of cereal at them emphatically.

"Hey peanut, why don't you stop makin' a mess up there and maybe Sar-Jay will consider your demand as a favor," he barked back, referring to himself in the third person.

"â€¦And stop waving that around, you'll get that Count Chocula all over the place! Last thing we need is to clean chocolate bits you scatter around," Chief added.

"Chocolate bits? This 'chocolate' you speak of comes in a solid consumable as well!" Arbiter asked in utter disbelief.

"Whoa, keep your pantsâ€¦ uhâ€¦ I meanâ€¦" Chief stammered, scanning the clothes-less body of the Arbiter, "â€¦Calm down."

Feeling impatient, Goro'maar threw the box down at them, plunking the arbiter in the head, which did not even as much cause a flinch. The box harmlessly bounced off his head, although got his attention, as Goro'maar started shouting, "You all shut up and get to work! Orâ€¦ orâ€¦"

"Oh, watch out! The little guy might **beat us up!**" Johnson quipped.

"Hmph! Well then Goro tell judge you not live up to agreement! Flashy human will be **really popular **in prison!"

Johnson gasped, "He's right! I'm way too attractive to survive in prison!" Johnson grumbled in disappointment as he grabbed his mop, "You win this time meatball. Just pray you don't see me again once I'm finished cleaning this place!"

Master Chief, grabbed his broom as well, and without any word, walked away, staring up at Goro'maar as he passed. The Arbiter, still standing there, looked left and right in hesitation, before furtively going back through the hole he'd walked through in the shelves. Although on his way out, he plucked up one of the boxes of Count Chocula on the shelf, and made a quick and embarrassed escape.

Watching them part ways without much for incident, Goro nodded his

tiny head as if he were impressed with himself. "Goro can get used to this!"

* * *

><p>"Well that was nice to see, I think I may be in the twilight zone!" Cortana suddenly spouted out, as Chief continued heading down the grocery aisle. "You managed to keep your mouth shut, and not get us into any more trouble. I can't believe it!"<p>

"Don't worry, I will make it up to you, do not fret!" Chief shouted out with all the confidence in the world.

"â€|What? I don't want you to owe me anything like that! I'm perfectly fine with nothing!"

"Oh, but Corty â€" you see, Goro'maar shall see the true ability of good ole' Master Chief â€" by the time I'm done with him, I'll be using him as a therapy ball. It's got to be done," he lectured as if the campaign against the small grunt were a no-brainer.

"Câ€|Cortyâ€|" she responded in a defeated tone. "You know Chiefâ€| I'd like to think that prison isn't going to be a very nice place to go. So before you decide to sabotage the one individual who could put you away for a very long time â€" I'd like you to upload me to a vending machine, or possibly that little kids ride outside the shopping centerâ€|"

"You mean the 'Pillarette of Autumn'? You'd want to be ridden on a daily basis?" Chief stopped and chortled, "Oo, that didn't sound right!"

"Oh, be mature! It's just anything would be better than prison with **you**!" she barked.

"Don't worry about that, the all-out assault is fool proof. I shall enact my revenge, all while maintaining my destiny as employee of the month," he explained, placing his hands on his hips to strike a pose â€" looking into the sky through the large hole in the wall, to allow the light to glisten off of his helmet in an impressive fashion.

"Ughâ€| How could you possibly do that? Good employees don't **enact revenge** on their superiors!"

"Not directly! Now see, I'll just have Arby and Johnson do the dirty work! I'll mastermind everything, then when one or both of them go to prison, I win employee of the month by default and Goro'maar feels my wrath at the same time!"

Cortana groaned, "Chiefâ€| you're surprisingly sinister you know. I take it you have a plan in mind alreadyâ€|?"

"Nope!" Chief spouted out, "I was hoping that you could take what I just told you, and fill in all the blanks! Piece of cake, right?"

Cortana couldn't respond, none of her algorithms had any suitable response for his brick-headed request.

End
file.